

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

1983 - 1984

---

28 June 1983

DOCUMENT 1-472/83

### REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-262/83 - COM(83) 197 final) for a regulation on the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Economic Community, on the one hand, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faroe Islands, on the other hand, establishing measures for salmon fishing in North Atlantic waters

Rapporteur : Mr Brøndlund NIELSEN



By letter of 28 April, 1983 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation on the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Economic Community, on the one hand, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faroe Islands, on the other hand, establishing measures for salmon fishing in North Atlantic waters.

On 16 May, 1983 the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Agriculture as the Committee responsible.

At its meeting of 26 May, 1983, the Committee on Agriculture appointed Mr Brøndlund NIELSEN rapporteur.

The Committee considered the Commission's proposal and the draft report at its meeting of 21/22 June 1983, and at the same meeting the Committee decided unanimously to recommend to Parliament that it approve the Commission's proposal without amendment.

The Committee then adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole unanimously.

The following took part in the vote : Mr CURRY, Chairman; Mr FRÜH, Mr DELATTE, Vice-chairmen; Mr Brøndlund NIELSEN, rapporteur; Mr ABENS (deputizing for Mr EYRAUD); Mr BATTERSBY, Mr GATTO, Mr HORD, Mr HOWELL, Mr LANGES (deputizing for Mr BOCKLET); Mr d'ORMESSON and Mr RIEGER (deputizing for Mr GAUTIER).

The report was deposited on 22 June, 1983.



The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

closing the procedure for consultation of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation on the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Economic Community, on the one hand, and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faroe Islands, on the other hand, establishing measures for salmon fishing in North Atlantic waters

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM (83) 197 final),<sup>1</sup>
- having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty ( Doc. 1-262/83),
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-472/83),
- having regard to the result of the vote on the Commission's proposal,

1. Approves the Commission's proposal as a provisional measure awaiting the final results of scientific investigation on the Faroese salmon fishery;
2. Welcomes the co-operative attitude of the Faroese authorities towards the scientists and on the negotiations on the salmon quota;
3. Believes that action must be taken to prevent illegal drift net fishing in Community waters and that lack of effective measures would lead to a breakdown of co-operation with the Faroese;
4. Urges the Commission, Council and Member States to do all in their power to ensure the earliest possible entry into force of the North Atlantic Salmon Convention;
5. Instructs its President to forward to the Council and Commission, as Parliament's opinion, the Commission's proposal as voted by Parliament and the corresponding resolution.

<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 116, 29.4.1983, p 5.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTPurpose of the Commission's proposal

1. In the course of consultations held in the framework of the EEC-Faroes Fishing Agreement concluded on 27 June 1980<sup>1</sup>, both sides undertook to open consultations no later than 30 April 1981 with a view to establishing a limitation of catches in the fishery zone of either party of salmon originally in the rivers of the other party.

Following from this, an Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters was concluded whereby the Faroese authorities undertook to restrict the total volume of salmon catches by Faroese vessels in international waters and waters under Faroes jurisdiction to 750 tonnes from the 1981-1982 season.

3. The Commission now proposes that an Agreement be concluded by which the Faroes agree to restrict the total volume of salmon catches to 625 tonnes for the 1983/84 season.

4. As a result of this provision, considerable scientific investigation has taken place to provide a better basis for assessing the Faroese fishery, including a delegation from the EEC and scientists from the Working Group of ICES on North Atlantic Salmon. The aim of the investigations has been to determine the age, state and origin of the salmon caught.

Importance of the salmon fishery to the Faroese economy

5. The fishing industry is of particular importance to the Faroese economy. About one third of the gross income stems from fishing, while fish products constitute 95% of the country's exports.

The Faroese salmon fishery has grown rapidly from 40 tonnes in 1977/78 to 718 tonnes in 1980, thus approaching the size of the Greenlandic fishery. The catch for the 1980/81 season is reported to be 968 tonnes of gutted fish, that is 1,050 tonnes total weight.

Salmon fishing gained in importance following the collapse of the herring fishery in the late 1960's and the reduction in salmon stocks. 42 Faroese and 7 Danish boats took part in the 1980/81 season.

<sup>1</sup> OJ No L 226, 29.8.89, p.11

### The Faroese salmon fishery

6. The Faroese can argue with some justification that the methods and organization of their salmon fishery make it less wasteful in terms of the salmon stocks than is the case with other fisheries. For example, the Faroese salmon fishery uses floating long lines, which allow discarded fish to be returned alive to the sea in contrast to the drift nets employed in other countries which result in wastage from poor condition fish dying after being discarded.

7. Furthermore, the individual and non-transferable quotas allocated to licensed vessels means that there is no race in the Faroese fishery to catch as much as possible within the overall quota: fishermen can be selective and integrate salmon fishing within a more general pattern of fishing. The risk of over-catching is reduced.

### Conclusions

8. This proposal can be approved awaiting the final reports of the scientists on the Faroese salmon fishery. It is essential that there be proper regulation of the high seas salmon fisheries such as the Faroese fisheries.

9. The Community and the Member States should do all that is possible to ensure that the North Atlantic Salmon Convention comes into force so as to generalize such regulation. Without a general system it is possible that ad hoc measures will eventually break down. For example, Icelandic resentment over Faroese salmon catches could lead to the withdrawal of the cod quota for Faroese fishermen, leading in its turn to Faroese fishermen maintaining their incomes by increased salmon fishing.

10. We should also point out that maintenance of a regulation of the Faroese fishery will be dependent in the longer term on proper controls of salmon fishing by Community fishermen.

The Faroese have shown a co-operative and even generous attitude towards the scientists in negotiations to fix the present quota. This attitude will not be maintained if illegal drift net fishing continues in Scottish, English and Irish waters. Effective action must be taken by the Community to regulate salmon fishing by means of quotas, licences and effective inspection, if we are to expect the Faroese to co-operate in future talks as they have in these.

